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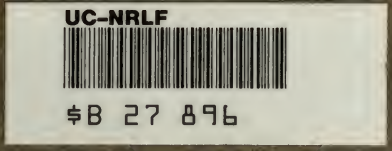

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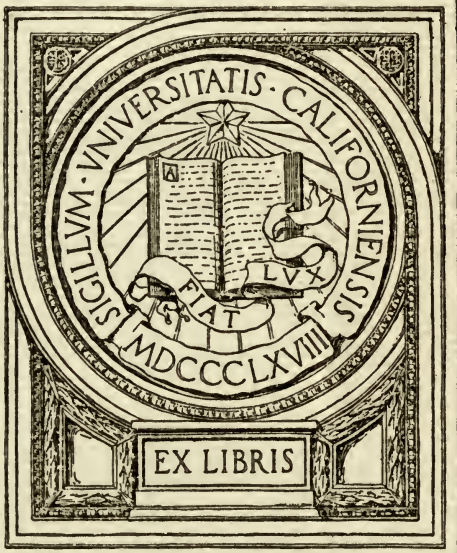

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The Rubáiyát of Ohow Dryyám

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THE RUBAIYAT OF OHOW DRYYAM

By J. L. DUFF

With Apologies to
OMAR

Illustrated by
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
[*Not of Philadelphia*]

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The Rubaiyat of Ohow Dryyam

I

Wail! for the Law has scattered into flight
Those Drinks that were our sometime dear Delight;
And still the Morals-tinkers plot and plan
New, sterner, stricter Statutes to indite.

II

After the phantom of our Freedom died
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried:
"Drink coffee, Lads, for that is all that's left
Since our Land of the Free is washed—and dried."

And still the Morals-tinkers plot and plan
New, sterner, stricter Statutes to indite.

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III

The Haigs indeed are gone, and on the Nose
That bourgeoned once with color of the rose
A deathly Pallor sits, while down the lane
Where once strode Johnny Walker—Water goes.

IV

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Coffee-house
We'll learn a new and temperate Carouse—
The Bird of Time flies with a steadier wing
But roosts with sleepless Eye—a Coffee Souse!

V

Each morn a thousand Recipes, you say—
Yes, but where match the beer of Yesterday?
And those Spring Months that used to bring the Bock
Seem very long ago and far away.

The Bird of Time flies with a steadier wing
But roosts with sleepless Eye—a Coffee Souse!

VI

A Book of Blue Laws underneath the Bough,
A pot of Tea, a piece of Toast,—and Thou
Beside me sighing in the Wilderness—
Wilderness? It's Desert, Sister, now.

VII

Some for a Sunday without Taint, and Some
Sigh for Inebriate Paradise to come,
While Moonshine takes the Cash (no Credit goes)
And real old Stuff demands a Premium.

A Book of Blue Laws underneath the Bough,
A pot of Tea, a piece of Toast,—and Thou . . .

VIII

The Scanty Stock we set our hearts upon
Still dwindles and declines until anon,
  Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
It lights us for an hour and then—is gone.

IX

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
TODAY of past Regrets and future Fears—
  Tomorrow!—Why, Tomorrow I may be
In Canada or Scotland or Algiers!

X

Yes, make the most of what we still may spend;
The last Drop's lingering Taste may yet transcend
  Anticipation's Bliss—though we are left
Sans Wine, Sans Song, Sans Singer, and—
  Sans End.

The Scanty Stock we set our hearts upon . . .

XI

Alike for those who for the Drouth prepared
And those who, like myself, more poorly fared,
  Fond Memory weaves Roseate Shrouds to dress
Departed Spirits we have loved—and shared.

XII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
The gilded Bar, and all my Lucre spent
  For bottled Joyousness, but evermore
Came out less steadily than in I went.

XIII

The legal Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on—and neither Thirst nor Wit
  Has lured it back to cancel half a line
To give a Man excuse for being lit.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
The gilded Bar . . .

XIV

And Bill the Bootlegger—the Infidel!—
When He takes my last Cent for just a Smell
Of Hooch, I wonder what Bootleggers buy
One half so precious as the Stuff they sell.

XV

Oh Bill, Who dost with White Mule and with Gin
Beset the Road I am to Wander in,
If I am garnered of the Law, wilt Thou,
All piously, Impute my Fall to Sin?

And Bill the Bootlegger—the Infidel!—

XVI

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
  But, Oh, how oft before we have beheld
Six Moons arise—who now seek *Two* in vain.

XVII

And when Thyself at last shall come to trip
Down that dim Dock where Charon loads his
    Ship,
  I'll meet Thee on the other Wharf if Thou
Wilt promise to have Something on thy Hip.

But, Oh, how oft before we have beheld
Six Moons arise . . .

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